

Studies Update

Beaver Dam studies form a new collaboration with the German Center for Neurodegenerative Disease (DZNE)

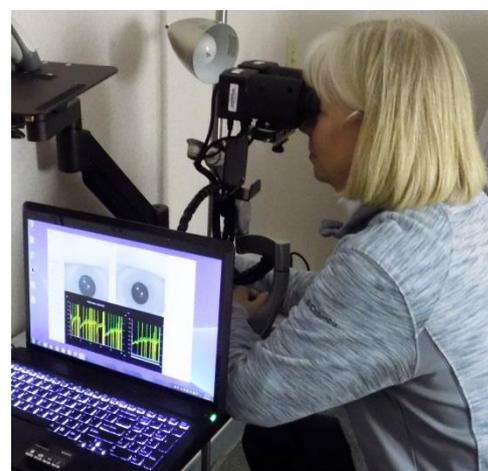
Following Dr. Cruickshanks' trip to Germany in 2016 to describe the Beaver Dam Studies with The German Center for Neurodegenerative Disease (known as the DZNE), a collaboration was formed between the Rhineland Studie and the Beaver Dam Studies. The Rhineland Studie, located in Bonn and sponsored by the DZNE, plans to follow 30,000 people over 30 years and will be measuring hearing, vision, vascular health and cognitive function much the same way the EHLS and BOSS have been over the past 20 years. Natascha Merten, a doctoral student with the DZNE group in Germany, recently spent 3 months in Wisconsin with our research group looking at how hearing function may be associated with cognitive function. While in Wisconsin Ms. Merten was excited to have the opportunity to visit Beaver Dam and see where the study examinations take place. She also commented on how the rolling countryside around Beaver Dam resembled her native Germany. The collaboration between the two groups will continue as Ms. Merten brings the expertise she gained from the Beaver Dam participants back to Germany.



Natascha Merten

A new eye measure has been added to the BOSS examination.

In our previous newsletter we told you about the Olfactometer to test sense of smell in EHLS participants and the Optical Coherence Tomographer to take a scan of the retina in the eye of BOSS participants. We have now also added an instrument that measures pupillary response to light stimulus, called a pupillometer. This measure has been found to be a useful screening tool for neuropathy. Dr. Judy Chen, a co-investigator of the BOSS is interested in the relationship between sleep patterns and the pupil's response to light and will use the data collected going forward this study phase to investigate this relationship.



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about some
of our
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Visit

*[http://boss.
pophealth.
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*BOSS exams
will continue
through the
summer of
2017.*

Beaver Dam Offspring Study & Epidemiology of Hearing Loss Study

Your participation in the Beaver Dam Studies has provided invaluable information to the field of healthy aging research.

Thank you!

What happens with your saved blood samples?

Study staff have been busy preparing and sending blood samples to be tested for a variety of potential risk factors and biomarkers. Participants who agreed to allow us to save blood for future testing gave us the ability to go back in time to measure their levels at past exam phases. For example, we recently measured lead and cadmium in blood samples from the first BOSS examination phase. Participants with high levels of lead in their blood were notified. Once we have finished collecting data from the most recent phase of the BOSS, we will be able to see how exposure to these heavy metals relates to development of sensory impairments later in life. We will also be sending out samples soon to measure levels of inflammation in the body and to measure some potentially neuroprotective factors to see how they relate to sensory impairments and healthy aging. As new biomarkers are discovered, your blood samples allow us to reach back to the past and see how each is related to other study measures and will help to inform ways to improve the health of the next generations. It goes without saying that your blood is vital to your body, but it is vital to our research program as well!

Sharing study findings with other researchers

Spring is a busy season for BOSS and EHLS researchers as we prepare to share findings from the studies with the scientific community. This year we are attending the American Auditory Society (AAS), the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO), and the Society for Epidemiologic Research (SER) annual meetings. These conferences provide a platform to inform other researchers and health care professionals about what we are learning about healthy aging from the BOSS and EHLS participants and also allow us to see what others in the field are doing, which can lead to new avenues of research or even collaboration with other groups. While other conference-attendees often provide helpful feedback to improve our research, the most common reaction is amazement at the dedication of our study participants in contributing to the health of future generations.

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The 10-year Follow-up for the BOSS Study is wrapping up!

Examinations for the third phase of the BOSS will be ending soon. We expect to continue to schedule study examinations through the summer months and wrap up in September. Thank you to everyone who has participated in the study. We owe the success of the study to you!